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ABSTRACT

This document describes two community based programs for high school students--the School and Community Service Program and the Career Apprenticeship Program. The School and Community Service Program was developed to give students the opportunity for greater social commitment, responsibility, and increased self esteem. These students work either as teacher aides or outside the school in hospitals, orphanages, or with the handicapped. The Career Apprenticeship Program has as its aim the development of opportunities for students to explore careers which are of interest to them in the community. The document describes for both programs the type of work students might be involved in; the adviser's role; program evaluation; how the programs are related to learning that takes place in the rest of the school; and practical aspects such as funding, transportation, and training. (PB)

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East Ramapo Central School District
Spring Valley, New York

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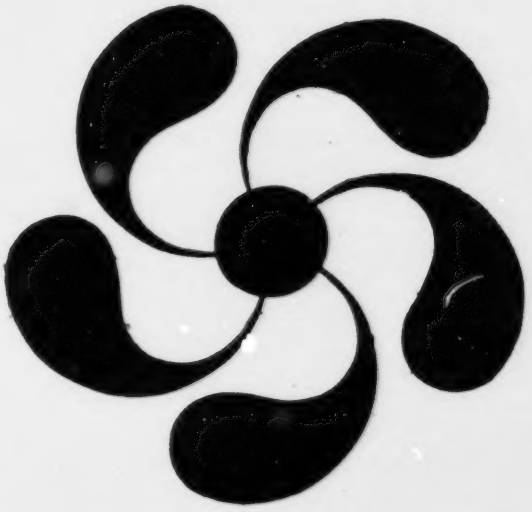
School Community Service

Career Apprenticeship Program



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Community Based Learning Experiences

SP008 953

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The East Ramapo Central School District, which is located in Rockland County, provides a K-12 educational experience for youngsters who live in Spring Valley, Monsey, Pomona, sections of New City, Nanuet and Pearl River. There is also a Pre-Kindergarten Program. The total number of students serviced by the district is 16,500 of which 3,675 are enrolled in its two high schools, Grades 10-12, Ramapo Senior High School and Spring Valley Senior High School. It is in these two high schools that the School and Community Service Program and the Career Apprenticeship Program, two community based learning experiences, are offered as elective courses.

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM

The School and Community Service Program was developed and instituted in Spring Valley Senior High School (the only high school at that time) in 1967. Known as the "Spring Valley Model", it started as a modest tutorial program, and has now grown to the vast and complex program it is today. Its major emphasis at that time was to provide the student, in a time of alienation, student unrest, drug addiction, and generational conflict, with an opportunity for greater social commitment, responsibility and increased self esteem. Today S.C.S. services fifteen elementary schools in the district, the Pre-Kindergarten Program, three junior high schools, the two senior high schools and about twenty-five agencies.

Who Can Participate In This Program?

The S.C.S. Program is an elective open to any student, Grades 10-12, regardless of ability, class standing, or background. The only criterion is that the student express an interest in performing service for others. The student is then placed in a "job" which takes into account his interests and abilities.

Is This A Credit Bearing Elective?

The student who successfully meets his commitment by performing 40 hours of satisfactory service, describing and evaluating his experiences in a log, participating in orientations and training sessions, participating in regular seminars with other students in the program, and meeting with his adviser on a regular basis to discuss his problems and progress, may earn .5 credits per term or semester towards graduation. If the student spends 80 hours during the school year, then he may earn 1 credit. It is possible for a student to work in S.C.S. for three years and thus earn 3 credits. There is no grade for S.C.S. nor is there a Pass or Fail. It appears on the student's record as Credit or No Credit.

What Are Some Of The Tasks Performed By The Student?

The students in S.C.S. work as tutors, teacher aides and recreation aides in the elementary and junior high schools. They work outside recreation programs, and as friendly visitors to the aged, physically handicapped, mentally retarded, and emotionally disturbed patients in the various institutions. They work with children in orphanages, as peer counselors, in animal care centers and as candy stripers in hospitals. They participate in special club enrichment programs for children with learning disabilities.

How Are The Students Trained For Their Jobs?

All S.C.S. students are oriented as to the aims and procedures of the S.C.S. Program. They are also oriented as to their roll at the various agencies. In order to develop in the student an awareness of the particular responsibilities they will have to fulfill at a particular agency, they are trained at the agency. For example, students working with the physically handicapped at the Helen Hayes Hospital are trained there in 3 - 4 sessions by the personnel there. The students working at the schools are oriented to policies and procedures of the schools by the supervisor (Principal or Assistant Principal) and then receive ongoing training from the teacher to whom they are assigned. In special programs such as the club enrichment program for children with learning disabilities, the special training by professionals is arranged by the S.C.S. adviser with the assistance of the leadership of the Association for Children with Learning Disabilities (ACLD). Training for working with geriatrics patients is arranged by the S.C.S. adviser with the assistance of professionals in the community who work in the field of geriatrics.

How Are The Seminar Sessions Conducted?

The students are expected to attend seminars, arranged heterogeneously, on a regular basis to meet with other students in the program and exchange ideas. It is during these seminars that community resource speakers speak and lead discussions, films are shown, mutual problems may be discussed and students may share their experiences. These sessions are conducted during the lunch periods so that students need not miss their classes nor their "job" after school. These sessions take place about once a month from November to May.

During mid-year and again towards the end of their service in June, the students meet in seminars arranged homogeneously at the schools or agencies to evaluate their own contributions, the problems at a particular agency, and the roles played by the agency supervisors. These seminars take place with the S.C.S. adviser and the agency supervisor present.

How Are The Individual Conferences Conducted?

The S.C.S. adviser meets with each student in the program on a regular basis to discuss his progress and help with any problems. Conferences take place in September, February and June of the student's service.

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Conferences are also scheduled in November and in April. Students are encouraged to see the adviser whenever a problem arises at any time during the school year, by making an appointment. The S.C.S. Office is open on a day-to-day basis to help with immediate problems (such as transportation, change in scheduling, illness, etc.). The S.C.S. adviser refers the student to his Guidance Counselor for an in-depth interview which related his S.C.S. experiences to his overall school experience and his future career decisions. It is essential that the S.C.S. adviser be in continuous contact with the student and his supervisor by phone in order to head off any impending problems.

How Are The Students Transported To Their Places Of Service?

Students who work at the elementary and junior high schools in the district are driven by bus to these schools. They take the regular school bus which goes in the direction of their school agency at the end of the school day at 2:04 P.M. Students who have abbreviated programs may take an activity bus going in the direction of their agency at 12:30. Some students take a special S.C.S. bus which leaves the school at 1:15 P.M. several times a week to their school or agency.

Students who work at agencies not located within the district are driven there by bus and then returned to their homes. For work in agencies in which a few students are involved, these students must provide their own transportation.

The School-Community Service Program has a budget for transportation.

How Is The S.C.S. Program Funded?

The School-Community Program is mainly funded by the school district. The major expense is the salary and benefits of the two advisers. This will vary with the salary schedule of each adviser who is paid on a ten month basis as a regular teacher. An allowance for the advisers' mileage, students' transportation, and miscellaneous expenses is also part of the budget.

What Is The Role Of The Adviser?

The adviser in each high school is responsible for all aspects of the S.C.S. Program in that school, subject to policy decisions made in the Office of Secondary Education. The adviser performs a variety of tasks. These include:

1. Identifying service opportunities.
2. Advising students and coordinating their placement.
3. Scheduling.
4. Orientation and training of students.
5. Conducting seminar and evaluation sessions.
6. Conducting individual counseling sessions.
7. Preparing a budget and transportation needs.
8. Preparing reports.
9. Publicizing the program.
10. Making periodic visits to the schools and agencies to observe S.C.S. volunteers at work.
11. Keeping accurate and up-to-date records of each student volunteer which might include logs, questionnaires, evaluation forms, and other pertinent information pertaining to the student's involvement in the program.
12. Attending monthly meetings of all of the volunteer directors of the agencies in Rockland County.
13. Developing and updating curricula to meet the needs of the students.
14. Coordinating efforts with guidance staff.
15. Dissemination of program.

To What Extent Is S.C.S. Involved In Community Service Projects?

The students in the S.C.S. Program not only spend the required (and often more) hours at their placements, but they also engage in community service related to their placement with the help of the adviser. For example, S.C.S. students hold parties at Letchworth, Jawonio, Rockland State Hospital, Helen Hayes Hospital and several of the nursing homes just prior to the Winter and Spring holidays. They provide the entertainment (band, clown, magic, etc.), refreshments and gifts to the people in these institutions. Sometimes as many as three hundred gifts are given during each period. The S.C.S. students enlist the aid of other students in each Homeroom Class,

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the teachers, the P.T.A., and the special clubs such as the Key Club (Kiwanis) and the Interact Club (Rotary) in these projects. They have helped clean the streams, collected food coupons for senior citizens, organized a Walk-A-Thon for Jawonio, made animals, flowers and puppets in special arts and crafts sessions for these people in the institutions.

How Is The S.C.S. Program Evaluated?

The School-Community Service Program is evaluated by the student, agency supervisor, parent, guidance counselor, S.C.S. adviser, school administrators, and the Office of Secondary Education.

1. The student evaluates the program through his ongoing log, his seminar sessions, his conferences with his adviser, through special evaluation forms, through a mid-year and final evaluation session with his adviser and agency supervisor.

2. The agency supervisor evaluates the student semi-annually through evaluation forms, the program through meeting with the adviser and by continuous ongoing phone conversations, and in writing at the end of the year.

3. The parent evaluates, in writing, the effect of the program on his child at the end of the year.

4. The guidance counselor evaluates, in writing, the effect of the program on the student at the end of the year, and through continuous ongoing discussions with the student.

5. The S.C.S. adviser is continuously evaluating the program by keeping in close contact with the students, the agency supervisors and the guidance counselors. The adviser reads and evaluates the contents of the students' logs regularly. If problems arise, the adviser must try to remedy them immediately. Students express their feelings and attitudes quite freely.

6. The school administrators are in continuous contact with the students and the advisers regarding the program. They sometimes attend seminar sessions, and are always invited to the mid-year and final evaluation sessions.

7. The Office of Secondary Education is in constant contact with the advisers through conferences, reports and communications. The Assistant Superintendent - Office of Secondary Education and his Administrative Assistant frequently have the opportunity to meet and speak with students in the program either on an individual basis or during evaluation and seminar sessions.

How Is The S.C.S. Program Related To The Academic Learning That Takes Place In The Rest Of The School?

The S.C.S. students are encouraged to apply what they learn in the classroom to their work outside in a number of ways. Students use their experiences on the outside for research papers in sociology, social studies and English. Students studying child development, psychology, etc., often ask to be placed in outside agencies related to their studies. Students use their S.C.S. experiences as the basis for original prose, poetry, drama, art, manuals, etc. Some of the students have had the opportunity to publicly discuss their experiences in front of large audiences, thus applying what they learned in their speech and mass media class. Frequently S.C.S. Programs are made available to the Health Classes, if there is a particularly good speaker or film. Students have written their own publicity for the school or local newspaper. Students have brought their own bands and guitars and have sung for patients. Students have used their ability in arts and crafts to make gifts for patients. Above all students have learned to relate to many people in different circumstances by working in this program.

CAREER APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

The Career Apprenticeship Program, which numbers around 125 high school students in the district, has as its major aim the development of opportunities for students to explore careers in the community which are of interest to them. Through this program it is expected that the student will gain a greater self-awareness, a stronger sense of responsibility, a better understanding of the demands of a particular career, vocation or profession, and a more mature approach to the decision making skills necessary in choosing a career.

The Career Apprenticeship Program was developed in 1971 by a committee of administrators, teachers, parents, students and representatives from some of the professions and businesses in the community. Originally developed as an adjunct to the School and Community Service Programs and geared to the student who was turned off to school, it has grown to the point where it offers all students the opportunity for career exploration.

Who Can Participate In The Career Program?

The Career Program is available mainly to Seniors as a field experience in the community. Seniors are generally more mature, have their own transportation, and have abbreviated schedules so they can spend more time in the community. Qualified Sophomores and Juniors participate if there are openings in the program. Students are accepted regardless of ability, class standing or background. A strong effort, however, is made by the adviser to determine just which career the student is interested in and his ability to function in this career (a student with a record of academic difficulties is not sent to a lawyer mentor). An adult mentor working in this field is identified in the community and the student is placed with this mentor. The Career Apprenticeship Program becomes an elective course for the student.

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How Does The Student Receive Credit For This Elective?

The student who successfully meets his commitment by working with the adult mentor for a minimum of 50 hours, describes and evaluates his experiences in a log, participates in regular seminar sessions with other C.A.P. students, and meets with his adviser on a regular basis in individual conferences, may earn .5 credits towards graduation. If the student completes 100 hours in one school year, he may earn 1.0 credits. C.A.P. appears on his record as "credit" with no grade, or pass, or fail.

What Are Some Examples Of Careers Which The Students Are Exploring?

Some students are exploring professional careers such as: law, medicine, architecture education, veterinary medicine, engineering, bio-chemistry, astronomy, bio-medical engineering, occupational and physical therapy, epidemiology, nursing, etc. Others are exploring trades such as printing, plumbing, house painting, construction contracting, T.V. repair, electrician, carpentry, auto mechanics. Some are exploring vocations such as medical assistant, dental assistant, horticulture, recording engineering, journalism, advertising illustration, graphics, travel agent, theatre, etc. Others are exploring several careers within a career cluster.

How Are The Mentors Chosen?

Mentors are chosen by personal recommendation, by soliciting the service groups such as Rotary and Kiwanis, by developing contacts through the P.T.A., by letters to associations (unions, legal societies, the medical association), and by checking the Yellow Pages in the Telephone Directory. The C.A.P. adviser makes the initial contact by phone or in person and explains the program. If the mentor agrees to take the student, the adviser drives the student to the mentor and the three of them review the objectives discussed over the phone. All parties generally agree on what the expectations are.

How Are The Seminar Sessions Conducted?

Since C.A.P. students are placed throughout the year until March 15, each student is oriented individually by the adviser. Several times each semester the C.A.P. students meet together and discuss their progress and experiences. A mid-year and a final evaluation session are held, usually with a school administrator or with the Assistant Superintendent - Office of Secondary Education or his Administrative Assistant present.

How Are Individual Conferences Conducted?

The C.A.P. adviser meets with each student on a regular basis to discuss his progress and help with any problems. Conferences take place at the beginning, middle and end of participation in the program. The adviser maintains continuous telephone contact with both the student and his mentor. Should any questions or problems arise, the student is expected to attend another conference with his adviser. The C.A.P. office is open on a daily basis to help with immediate problems (such as changes in the mentor's plans, student problems in getting to the "Job", scheduling, etc.). The C.A.P. adviser refers the student to his guidance counselor for an in-depth interview which relates his C.A.P. experiences to his overall school experiences and his future career decisions.

How Are The Students Transported To Their Mentors?

If the mentors are located within the school district, then the student may use a school bus going in that direction at the end of the school day. In most cases, however, the student must provide his own transportation since many of the mentors are located in other parts of the county.

How Is The C.A.P. Program Funded?

The C.A.P. Program is under the direction of the S.C.S. adviser, and expenses are met through the S.C.S. budget. The C.A.P. students are specially insured if they work for private businessmen and professionals. Those who work in public agencies are insured by those agencies.

What Is The Role Of The C.A.P. Adviser?

The adviser in each high school is responsible for all aspects of the C.A.P. Program in that school, subject to policy decisions made in the Office of Secondary Education. The adviser performs a variety of tasks. These may include:

1. Recruiting students.
2. Identifying career mentors and opportunities in the community.
3. Advising students and coordinating their placement.
4. Scheduling.
5. Orientation of students and mentors.
6. Conducting seminar and evaluation sessions.
7. Conducting individual counseling sessions.

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8. Preparing reports.

9. Publicizing the program.

10. Making occasional visits to the student at his placement.

11. Keeping up to date accurate records on each student.

12. Maintaining constant contact with the students and their mentors.

13. Assisting in the development and maintenance of a Career Information Center and Library.

14. Dissemination of program.

15. Coordination with guidance program.

16. Liaison with parents and community.

How Is The C.A.P. Program Evaluated?

The success of the Career Apprenticeship Program hinges on the degree to which its objectives are attained. The Career Apprenticeship Program is evaluated by the student, by the mentor, by the parent, by the guidance counselor, by the C.A.P. adviser, by a school administrator and by the Office of Secondary Education.

1. The student evaluates the C.A.P. Program by his ongoing log, his seminar sessions, his individual conferences with his adviser and his guidance counselor, through special evaluation forms, and through a mid-year and final evaluation session with his adviser and his mentor.

2. The parent evaluates, in writing, the effect of the C.A.P. Program on the progress and career awareness of the student.

3. The mentor evaluates the student through an evaluation form and through a final evaluation session with the student and the adviser. He also continuously keeps the adviser aware by phone of the student's progress and the effectiveness of the program.

4. The guidance counselor evaluates in writing the effect on the student of his participation in the Career Program and the extent to which the program was of benefit in the student's decision on a career.

5. The school administrators are in continuous contact with the students and advisers regarding this program. They are always invited to attend mid-year and final evaluation seminar sessions.

6. The Office of Secondary Education is in constant contact with the advisers through conferences, reports and communications. The Assistant Superintendent - Office of Secondary Education and his Administrative Assistant have the opportunity to meet with and speak to students in the program either on an individual basis or during evaluation sessions.

How Is The C.A.P. Program Related To The Academic Learning That Takes Place In The Rest Of The School?

The C.A.P. students are encouraged to apply what they learn in the classroom to their job in the community. Thus, the "bio-medical engineer" must apply what he has learned about physiology, measurement, the new technical devices available in medicine. The bio-chemist must apply knowledge gained in the biology, physics, and chemistry class. The architect must apply what he has learned in drafting, industrial arts and the architecture class. The electrician applies what he is learning at B.O.C.E.S., a technical training school. Each department in the school is encouraged to recommend students for "jobs" in the community. For example, the art teacher was helpful in placing a student with an advertising firm doing graphics and illustration. Teachers of various subjects are encouraged to informally discuss with the C.A.P. student what he is learning in that particular field. Departments are becoming more aware of career education within their own departments. Students can use their experiences for reports and term papers.

WHAT ARE THE OVERALL CONSIDERATIONS

The School and Community Service Program and the Career Apprenticeship Program can be exciting ones to pupils, parents and professionals. It is an effort to link Career Education Orientation with the educational program in the school while, at the same time, it provides a social and emotional maturation experience for the young adults who attend our senior high schools. It also helps to build bridges which serve to improve relationships between school and community. In the long run all benefit; the student, the teacher, the parent and the community citizens.

What underlies, however, the effectiveness of these two programs, is a faculty adviser who is deeply dedicated to the welfare of the students and the program; who has the stamina and the drive to maintain a desirable momentum; who has the sensitivity and the empathy to relate extremely well to all who are part of the program, and that includes the parents the professionals and the mentors, as well as the pupils; and who has the insight and the intelligence to implement on the highest possible level of satisfaction, while at the same time bringing fresh ideas to continuously upgrade the educational services that we render to our school citizens.